



National Disabled Veterans

Winter Sports Clinic

Skier Profile

Joseph Hineman – WWII Veteran Living with Purpose!



Determination, perseverance and commitment are fundamental beliefs for Joseph Hineman, of Des Moines, Iowa. At age 20, he was drafted into the U.S. Army, serving for three years in the 99th Infantry Division. In October 1944, he arrived in Germany. Reflecting, Hineman said, “I arrived before the Battle of the Bulge began and my unit was involved. It was absolutely horrific. Adding to the terror of battle, the cold was absolutely numbing. I was lucky to have survived.”

Several months after the siege ended, Hineman and a fellow soldier found themselves under attack when their infantry unit tried to capture the bridge at Ramagan over the Rhine River. “I was hit by shrapnel from a German mortar that burst in the trees. I got hit in the left thigh and right calf,” he recalled. Medical care was administered but the shrapnel still caused a severe infection. The infection grew worse and Hineman’s life was in grave danger. In order to save him, in March 1945 doctors in Paris amputated his left leg above the knee.

Honorably discharged the following year, Hineman married, raised a family and pursued an education. He earned a Bachelors Degree from Iowa State University, Masters Degrees from both the University of Missouri and the University of Northern Colorado, and a Doctorate in psychology from the University of Utah. For the next 30 years, he worked for the Knoxville VA Medical Center, where he provided psychological care to fellow U.S. veterans.

At 84 years of age, Hineman will be among the oldest participants at the 21st National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic. Being among the oldest has earned him distinctive opportunities. At past Clinics, he has enjoyed meeting the newly injured men and women who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. He said, “The Clinic is a great way to socialize with military peers from various backgrounds. We share a generational bond, because even though I’m much older, I can identify with them psychologically and physiologically because of our similar injuries.”

Hineman has attended the Clinic, known for inspiring “Miracles on the Mountainside,” for more than ten years. Describing the program he says, “The Winter Sports Clinic is a complete and satisfying experience, with great ski-runs, an educational component and fun alternate activities.” He enjoys participating in many of the adaptive activities offered at the event each year, but his favorite is Alpine skiing using a bi-ski. Next on the list are the snowmobiling activities, saying, “I like the speed!”

When he is not at the Winter Sports Clinic, Joseph Hineman can be found volunteering at the local county jail where he provides counseling in anger management, or working as a reading mentor for fourth grade children in his community. Recently, he has taken up motorcycling on a modified Honda Goldwing. “Live with purpose,” he tells others. His achievements are truly an inspiration to those who think that age, injury or life’s uncertainties could be barriers to greatness.

Miracles on a Mountainside!



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